

Appl. No. : 09/377,447
Filed : August 19, 1999

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 22, line 3 with the following:

A5
--Figure 8 illustrates the steps that are performed by the product detail page process 80C to generate detail pages (as in Figure 3) for participants in the Contact Information Exchange program. As indicated above, product detail pages can be accessed using any of the site's navigation methods, such as conducting a search for a title. In step 150, a list of the base communities of which the user is a member is obtained -- either from a browser cookie or from the user database 82. In step 152, for each base community in this list, that community's product-to-member mapping table 86B (Figure 5) is accessed to identify any other users within the community that have purchased the product. In step 154, the contact information for each such user is read from the table 86B or from the user database 82. In step 156, the contact information and associated base community names are incorporated into the product's detail page.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please rewrite the claims as follows:

A6
1. (Amended) A method of assisting users in selecting items from an electronic catalog of items, the catalog accessible to users of an online sales system that provides services for allowing users to purchase items from the catalog, the method comprising:

providing a database which contains information about a plurality of user communities, wherein different communities represent different subsets of users of the store;

tracking online purchases of items from the sales system by the users to generate purchase history data, and storing the purchase history data in a computer memory;

processing at least the purchase history data to identify at least one item which, based on actions of both members and non-members of a selected community of said plurality of user communities, has become popular within the selected community relative to its popularity outside the selected community; and

electronically notifying users that the at least one item is popular within the selected community.

2. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein electronically notifying users comprises generating a Web page which includes a community-based most popular items list.

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A7
4. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein electronically notifying users comprises automatically generating and sending an email message to members of the selected community.

A8
12. (Amended) A system for assisting users of an online sales system in selecting items from an electronic catalog of items, the system comprising:

at least one database which contains purchase history data for users of the sales system, and which contains information about a plurality of user communities wherein different communities represent different subsets of users of the sales system; and

a computer process which analyzes at least the purchase history data to identify items that are popular within particular communities of the plurality of communities relative to their respective popularity levels among a general user population, and which notifies users of the sales system of the items that are popular within particular communities.

A9
24. (Amended) The system of Claim 12, wherein the process identifies items that are popular within particular communities by at least identifying a set of items purchased by members of a community that distinguishes the community from a general user population.

A10
26. (Amended) A method of assisting users in selecting items from an electronic catalog of items, the catalog accessible to users of an online sales system that provides services for allowing users to purchase items from the catalog, the method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

identifying a subset of users of the store that have email addresses that satisfy a particular criteria, wherein the subset comprises a plurality of users;

identifying at least one item that is popular among the subset of users, wherein the step of identifying comprises processing purchase history data of the subset of users and of users falling outside said subset; and

electronically notifying users of the online sales system of a popularity of the at least one item among the subset of users.

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AI1
32. (Amended) A method of recommending items from a catalog of items, comprising:
identifying a subset of a general population of users;
tracking at least one type of user activity that indicates user affinities for particular items of the catalog to generate history data;
processing the history data of the general population of users, including the subset of users, to identify a set of items that distinguish the subset from the general population; and
recommending items from the set of items to members of the subset.

33. (Amended) The method of Claim 32, wherein processing the history data comprises processing purchase history data, and the set of items consists essentially of items purchased by members of the subset.

AI2
36. (Amended) The method of Claim 32, wherein the subset consists of members of an implicit-membership community.

Please add the following new claims:

37. (New) The method as in Claim 1, wherein processing the purchase history data comprises substantially excluding from consideration purchase history data falling outside a selected look-back period, so that calculated item popularity levels strongly reflect current interests of users.

AI3
38. (New) The system as in Claim 12, wherein the computer process substantially excludes from consideration purchase history data falling outside a selected look-back period.

39. (New) The method as in Claim 26, wherein identifying at least one item that is popular among the subset of users comprises comparing a popularity level of the item among the subset of users to a popularity level of the item among a general population of users.

40. (New) The method as in Claim 26, wherein identifying at least one item that is popular among the subset of users comprises identifying a set of items that distinguish the subset from a general population of users.

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41. (New) The method as in Claim 40, wherein identifying a set of items that distinguish the subset from a general population of users comprises applying a censored chi-square type algorithm to the purchase history data.

Sub C17 42. (New) The method as in Claim 26, wherein identifying at least one item that is popular among the subset of users comprises at least one of (a) comparing a velocity of an item within the community to a velocity of the item within a general user population; and (b) comparing an acceleration of the item within the community to an acceleration of the item within a general population.

43. (New) A method of assisting users in selecting items from an electronic catalog of items, comprising:

identifying, among a population of users of the electronic catalog, a subset of users that, based on user shipping addresses, reside in a common geographic region;

monitoring actions of the subset of users, and of users falling outside the subset, to generate history data reflective of user actions performed with respect to items in the electronic catalog;

processing the history data to identify an item that is relatively popular among the subset of users in comparison to a popularity level of the item among the population of users; and

~~notifying at least one user that the item is popular within the geographic region.~~

Sub C17 44. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein processing the history data to identify an item that is relatively popular among the subset of users comprises at least one of (a) comparing a velocity of the item within the subset to a velocity of the item within a general user population; and (b) comparing an acceleration of the item within the subset to an acceleration of the item within a general user population.

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45. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein processing the history data to identify an item that is relatively popular among the subset of users comprises applying a censored chi-square type algorithm to the history data.

46. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein notifying at least one user that the item is popular within the geographic region comprises presenting to the user a list of items that are popular in the geographic region relative to popularity levels outside the region.

47. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein the user actions performed with respect to items in the electronic catalog comprise item purchases.

48. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein the user actions performed with respect to items in the electronic catalog comprise item viewing events.

49. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein the geographic region corresponds to a particular city.

50. (New) The method as in Claim 43, wherein processing the history data comprises applying a time window to the history data such that popularity of the item is measured substantially from a most recent set of the history data.

REMARKS

The foregoing amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed on February 7, 2002. Applicants' representative would like to initially thank Examiner Zurita for the courtesy he extended during the telephone interview conducted earlier today.

I. Summary of the amendments

By the foregoing amendment, the independent claims and several dependent claims have been amended along the lines discussed during the interview. Applicants have also added new Claims 37-50 to the application, and have corrected several minor errors in the specification (including those identified in the Office Action). The amendments to the specification and to the original claims are shown in redline form on the attached pages.